



CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM

Program Overview

fall 1997

What Is CALFED?

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program was initiated in 1995 by Governor Pete Wilson and the Clinton Administration to address environmental and water management problems associated with the Bay-Delta system, an intricate web of waterways created at the junction of the San Francisco Bay and the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers and the watershed that feeds them. Today the Bay-Delta system is in serious trouble. Habitats are declining, and some native species are listed as endangered. The system has suffered from impaired water quality. Water supply reliability has declined significantly. Many levees are structurally weak and present a high risk of failure.

The Bay-Delta is a critically important part of California's natural environment and economy. It supplies drinking water for more than 22 million Californians and irrigation water for more than four million acres of the world's most productive farmland, which, for example, produce 45 percent of the nation's fruits and vegetables. It supports 120 fish and wildlife species; some found nowhere else on the planet. Ultimately, California's trillion-dollar economy, the seventh largest in the world, is at risk if Bay-Delta environmental and water management problems are not resolved.

3 Program Phases

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is carrying out a three phase process to achieve broad agreement on comprehensive solutions for the Bay-Delta System. The three phases are:

Phase I -- Develop Alternatives: During Phase I (June 1995 to August 1996) the Program worked to clearly define the fundamental problems in the Bay-Delta system, ecosystem quality, water quality, water supply and levee system vulnerability. This resulted in the development of a mission statement and general goals for the Program. It also resulted in an initial set of alternatives, or sets of actions, to be considered in Phase II.

Phase II -- Further Analysis and Environmental Review: To comply with the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act, the Program is preparing a program-level, or first tier, Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement to identify impacts associated with the various alternatives. (Program-level reports evaluate the broad array of potential impacts associated with a project, rather than site-specific, detailed impact analysis.) Upon selection of a preferred alternative, the third Phase of the process begins, site-specific environmental review.

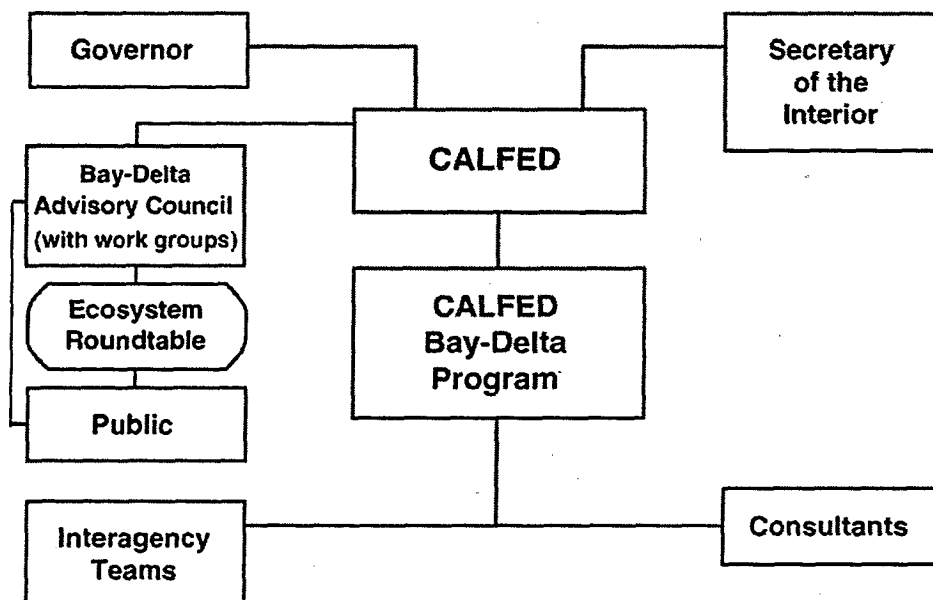
Phase III --Implementation: During Phase III, which will begin in early 1999 and continue perhaps for 20 to 30 years, the preferred alternative will be implemented. This phase includes preparation of specific, or second-tier, environmental documents for all specific actions in the selected alternative. This may entail the development of multiple environmental documents necessary to implement the many actions designed to achieve a multi-objective strategy.

*The mission of the
CALFED Bay-Delta
Program is to develop a
long-term comprehensive
plan that will restore
ecological health and
improve water
management for
beneficial uses of
the Bay-Delta system.*

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What's the Structure?

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is a cooperative, interagency effort involving a number of state and federal agencies with management and regulatory responsibilities in the Bay-Delta. A Program Coordination Team (PCT) made up of individuals from each participating agency serves as a liaison between the Bay-Delta Program and policy and technical experts within these agencies. Bay-Delta stakeholders -- members of the public who are interested in Bay-Delta issues -- contribute to Program design, problem-solving and decision-making. Public participation is an essential part of the Program and comes primarily through the federally chartered Bay-Delta Advisory Council, public meetings and workshops. The Ecosystem Roundtable, a subcommittee of BDAC, provides specific input on coordination of CALFED ecosystem restoration projects and priorities for near-term ecosystem restoration to be pursued prior to full implementation of the preferred alternative but consistent with it.



Public Involvement

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is an historic partnership between the state and federal governments to design and implement the largest environmental restoration effort in United States history. However, government alone cannot solve the problems facing the Bay-Delta. Active participation and understanding of the issues by all the Bay-Delta interests and the public is the key to success. Already, thousands of Californians have contributed to the Bay-Delta

Program. By volunteering time, sharing expertise, expressing an idea and/or casting a vote in support of Prop 204, all have helped shape the solutions being studied today. Each of us has an unprecedented opportunity to get involved in solving the problems of the Bay-Delta and securing California's water future. Visit the CALFED website or call the Public Information Line to find out about upcoming public meetings in your area.